

# **Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey**

## **State of Tennessee**



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **State Senate passes Teacher Tenure Reform**

(*NASHVILLE, TN*) – The State Senate today passed a major teacher tenure reform initiative, fulfilling years of Republican efforts to reform Tennessee’s tenure system. The measure, which builds on the bold initiatives passed last year with Tennessee’s First to the Top program, is designed to improve student achievement and give them more opportunities to succeed in an increasingly competitive global economy.

“Tenure reform brings us one step closer to our goal of ensuring a high performing, quality teacher in every classroom,” said **Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey (R-Blountville)**. “It will also help us identify outstanding teachers as well as those who need our support to become outstanding teachers.”

Key Provisions of the [Senate Bill 1528](#) include:

- Extends teacher tenure probationary period from three to five years
- Ties the teacher evaluation system to tenure eligibility and requires a teacher to score in the top two (out of a total of five) effectiveness categories on the evaluation in the two years immediately preceding becoming eligible for tenure
- Expands the definition of “inefficiency” as a grounds for dismissal of a tenured teacher to include evaluations demonstrating an overall performance effectiveness level that is “below expectations” or “significantly below expectations”
- For teachers tenured after the enactment of the new law, it requires a return to probationary status after two consecutive years scoring in the bottom two effectiveness categories of the evaluation
- Moves non-renewal deadline from May 15 to June 15

Tennessee currently ranks 46th in student overall academic achievement.

The legislation uses the work of First to the Top which, in collaboration with teachers, creates an evaluation system that measures teacher effectiveness. The reform initiative

passed last year requires annual evaluations using teacher effect data in teacher and principal evaluations. The evaluation system capitalizes on Tennessee's two decades of experience with the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) in evaluating student achievement on a year-to-year basis.

The deadline for the evaluations to be put into place under the First to the Top law is July 2011. There has been a diligent process for determining what measure should be used for non-tested subject areas.

The bill also received approval in the House Education Subcommittee and is now pending action before the full House Education Committee next week.